

IN THE CLAIMS:

The text of all pending claims, (including withdrawn claims) is set forth below. Cancelled and not entered claims are indicated with claim number and status only. The claims as listed below show added text with underlining and deleted text with ~~strikethrough~~. The status of each claim is indicated with one of (original), (currently amended), (cancelled), (withdrawn), (new), (previously presented), or (not entered).

Please AMEND claims 1-11 and ADD new claim 12 according to the following:

1. (CURRENTLY AMENDED) A profit sharing method used for designing a product having a plurality of elements modifiable to adapt to fashion trends, the method being executed by a server computer, and comprising:

providing participants with a questionnaire including a plurality of questions, each question concerning an element of the product, asking each participant to select one option from a plurality of options for the element of the product in each question;

a step of obtaining-retrieving answers to the questionnaire including pieces of answer information each specifying an-the one option for each question selected by a participant from the plurality of options corresponding to an-the element which characterizes a commercial article in each question;

a step of specifying one option as an-adopted option from the plurality of options of each question of the questionnaire corresponding to the element, based on the retrieved pieces of answer information-obtained in said-obtaining step;

determining a final design of the product in which each element is as specified in the corresponding one adopted option;

a step of assigning predetermined points to a-each participant who-for each question if the participant selected the corresponding one adopted option-equivalent to said-adopted option from the plurality of options of the question; and

a step of determining an individual return value which should be given to the participant in accordance with the predetermined points assigned to the participant.

2. (CURRENTLY AMENDED) The method according to claim 1, wherein in the specifying of the adopted option, the one adopted option is determined as being an option

one of the options selected by most participants is specified as the adopted option in said specifying step.

3. (CURRENTLY AMENDED) The method according to claim 1, wherein each piece of answer information specifies, as to a plurality of elements, options which

characterize the ~~commercial article~~ product, respectively.

4. (CURRENTLY AMENDED) The method according to claim 1, wherein ~~said in the determining step determines of~~ the individual return value, ~~the individual return value is obtained~~ by multiplying ~~the predetermined~~ points assigned to the participant by a unit return value calculated by dividing a total return value equivalent to an amount of money ~~that~~ should be returned to the participants by a total of the points assigned to ~~the~~ respective participants.

5. (CURRENTLY AMENDED) The method according to claim 1, further comprising a ~~step of~~ transmitting a piece of selection information indicating the one adopted option ~~options~~ corresponding to the element of a question of the questionnaire to a client computer of the participant that is connected to said server computer.

6. (CURRENTLY AMENDED) The method according to claim 1, further comprising a ~~step of~~ creating image data of the ~~article-product~~ characterized by ~~the~~ at least one adopted option.

7. (CURRENTLY AMENDED) A profit sharing method executed by a client computer connectable to a server computer, the method comprising:
receiving a questionnaire including a plurality of questions, each question being directed to an element characterizing a commercial article;

~~a step of~~ obtaining pieces of answer information each specifying at least ~~an~~ one option selected by a participant from options corresponding to ~~an element which characterizes a commercial article~~ each question; and

~~a step of~~ sending the obtained pieces of answer information ~~obtained in said obtaining step~~ to the server computer ~~for making to determine~~ said server computer to execute:

~~a step of~~ specifying one option ~~as an adopted option~~ corresponding to the element, based on the pieces of answer information ~~obtained in said obtaining step~~ received from the client computer and determining a final design of the commercial article according to the one adopted option for each of the plurality of questions of the questionnaire,

~~a step of~~ assigning predetermined points to a participant who selected ~~the option equivalent to said one adopted option~~ as the at least one option, and

~~a step of~~ determining individual return values ~~that~~ should be respectively given to participants in accordance with the predetermined point-points assigned to the

participants.

8. (CURRENTLY AMENDED) A computer readable medium containing a profit sharing program comprising:

a module making a server computer to issue a questionnaire including a plurality of questions, each question being directed to an element characterizing a commercial article, and having a plurality of options as possible answers to the question;

~~a module making a the server computer execute a step of obtaining to acquire~~ pieces of answer information, each piece of information specifying at least an option selected for a question by a participant from options corresponding to an element which characterizes a commercial article;

~~a module making the server computer execute a step of specifying to select for each question one option as an adopted option corresponding to the element, based on the acquired pieces of answer information obtained in said obtaining step and to determine a final design of the commercial article according to the adopted option for each element;~~

~~a module making the server computer execute a step of assigning to assign for each question predetermined points to a participant who selected the option equivalent to said adopted option; and~~

~~a module making the server computer execute a step of determining to determine individual return values that should be respectively given to participants in accordance with the predetermined points assigned to the participants.~~

9. (CURRENTLY AMENDED) A computer readable medium containing executable code of a profit sharing method used for designing a product, the executable codes program-product comprising:

a first executable code making a server computer to issue a questionnaire including a plurality of questions, each question being directed to an element of a commercial article, and providing a plurality of options to be selected by a participant;

~~a module-second executable code making a the server computer execute a step of obtaining to acquire~~ pieces of answer information, each piece of answer information specifying at least an option selected by a participant for at least one question from options corresponding to an element which characterizes a commercial article;

~~a module-third executable code making the server computer execute a step of specifying one option as to specify an adopted option corresponding to the element for each question, based on the pieces of answer information obtained in said obtaining step and to determine a final design of the commercial article according to the adopted option for each element;~~

~~a module-fourth executable code making the server computer execute a step of to~~
assigning predetermined points to a participant who selected the ~~option equivalent to said~~
adopted option; and

~~a module-fifth executable code making the server computer execute a step of~~
~~determining to determine~~ individual return values ~~that~~ should be respectively given to
participants in accordance with the predetermined points assigned to the participants.

10. (CURRENTLY AMENDED) A profit sharing system comprising:

a server computer connectable to a client computer; and

a storing device containing a profit sharing program comprising:

a module making the server computer to issue a questionnaire including a
plurality of questions, each question being directed to an element of a commercial article, and
providing a plurality of options to be selected by a participant;

~~a module making the server computer execute a step of obtaining to acquire~~
pieces of answer information each specifying ~~at least an option for at least one question~~
selected by a participant from options corresponding to ~~an the element which characterizes a of~~
the commercial article,

~~a module making the server computer execute a step of specifying one option as~~
~~to specify an adopted option corresponding to the element, based on the acquired pieces of~~
answer information ~~obtained in said obtaining step and to determine a final design of the~~
commercial article according to the adopted option for each element,

~~a module making the server computer execute a step of assigning to assign~~
predetermined points to a participant ~~who for each question when the participant~~ selected the
~~option equivalent to said-adopted option, and~~

~~a module making the server computer execute a step of determining to~~
~~determine~~ individual return values ~~that~~ should be respectively given to participants in
accordance with the predetermined points assigned to the participants.

11. (CURRENTLY AMENDED) A commercial article developing method comprising:

submitting a questionnaire including a plurality of questions, each question being
directed to an element characterizing the commercial article;

~~a step of obtaining pieces of answer information each specifying at least an option~~
selected by a participant from options corresponding to ~~an the element which characterizes a~~
~~commercial article;~~

~~a step of specifying one option as an adopted option corresponding to the element,~~
based on the obtained pieces of answer information ~~obtained in said obtaining step; and~~

~~a step of developing a design of the commercial article based on the basis of the adopted option specified in said specifying step for each element.~~

12. (NEW) A method of designing of a product having a plurality of elements, the method comprising:

obtaining information from participants regarding preferred embodiments of each element using a multiple choice questionnaire; and

determining a design of the product in which each element is executed according to an embodiment selected by most participants.